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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/841,301	04/24/2001	Scott Lee Wellington	5659-01800 TH1942	4730
7590	01/06/2004		EXAMINER	
DEL CHRISTENSEN SHELL OIL COMPANY P.O. BOX 2463 HOUSTON, TX 77252-2463			KRECK, JOHN J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3673	

DATE MAILED: 01/06/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/841,301	WELLINGTON ET AL. <i>SN</i>
	Examiner	Art Unit
	John Kreck	3673

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If no period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 October 2003.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) See Continuation Sheet is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1608-1611, 1613-1615, 1617-1650, 1652-1657, 1659-1685, 5396-5400, 5402-5407, and 5409-5415 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 34,35.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____

Continuation of Disposition of Claims: Claims pending in the application are 1608-1611,1613-1615,1617-1650,1652-1657,1659-1685,5396-5400,5402-5407 and 5409-5415.

DETAILED ACTION

The amendment dated 10/27/03 has been entered.

Claims 1608-1611, 1613-1615, 1617-1650, 1652-1657, 1659-1685, 5396-5400, 5402-5407, and 5409-5415 are pending.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

1. Claims 1608-1611, 1613-1615, 1617-1650, 1652-1657, 1659-1685, 5396-5400, 5402-5407, and 5409-5415 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over the claims of copending Application No. 09/840,937; 09/841,170; 09/841,195; 09/841,283; 09/841,285; 09/841,286; 09/841,288; 09/841,291; 09/841,294; 09/841,297; 09/841,300; 09/841,303; 09/841,306; 09/841,308; 09/841,429; 09/841,431; 09/841,432; 09/841,434;

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09/841,438; 09/841,439; 09/841,441; 09/841,443; 09/841,444; 09/841,445; 09/841,449; 09/841,488; 09/841,490; 09/841,495; 09/841,500; 09/841,502; 09/841,638; and 09/841,639. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the independent claims in the instant application are generally broader, and include only further limitations (e.g. hydrogen weight percentage greater than 4%) which are inherent and/or obvious in most hydrocarbon or coal formations.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Response to Arguments

It is noted that applicant has made no substantive arguments concerning the double patenting rejections set forth in paper 33.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John Kreck whose telephone number is (703)308-2725. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 5:30 am - 2:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather Shackelford can be reached on (703)308-2978. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703)872-9326.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)306-4177.



John Kreck
Examiner
Art Unit 3673

JJK